



Office of the Governor

**JB Pritzker**

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## **State Partners with Local Hospitals and Health Centers to Expand Equitable Distribution of Vaccine in Cook and Collar Counties**

*New Pilot Program with Family Christian Health Center, Chicago Behavioral Hospital, AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center and the Lake County Health Department to Help Reach Underserved Communities*

**(COOK & COLLAR COUNTIES)**- Building on existing efforts to ensure equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health today announced a new partnership with four local federally qualified health centers (FQHC) and safety net hospitals to administer vaccines to residents in Cook, DuPage, and Lake Counties. The partnership is part of a broader pilot program the state launched in coordination with five federally qualified health centers (FQHC) and five safety net hospitals across the state. In the coming weeks, the pilot program will expand to include additional critical access hospitals across the state. Vaccines are available to residents by appointment only.

“Ensuring the most vulnerable Illinois residents have a trusted, reliable health care provider to administer the COVID-19 vaccine is critical to combating this deadly virus,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “This new pilot program builds on robust efforts by the administration to ensure equity is at the center of the state’s Vaccine Administration Plan. By partnering with providers in underserved communities we can reduce vaccine hesitancy and ensure we are reaching Illinoisans in the communities they call home.”

The state will provide each of the sites with approximately 300-500 vaccine doses per week, in addition to the allocated doses the state distributes to existing health care partners like local health departments and pharmacies. IDPH used the COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index (CCVI) as well as local vaccination rates to select sites for the first round of the pilot program.

The new partnership between the state and local health entities as well as other similar providers will help ensure that communities hardest hit by COVID-19 have access to the vaccine. The program also aims to reduce vaccine hesitancy in underserved areas by providing residents the ability to receive vaccines more quickly from trusted providers.

“The pilot program will continue our equity-focused approach to vaccine distribution by targeting residents in communities most impacted by COVID-19 and who need relief the most,” **said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle**. “I am grateful for this important partnership with the State of Illinois, FQHCs and safety-net hospitals so we can protect our most vulnerable residents and move forward with our recovery.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic has further accentuated health disparities and the need for more accessible and equitable health care,” **said Sen. Johnson (D-Lake County)**. “The new vaccine site in Waukegan recognizes people who are often overlooked, helping boost their confidence. It will give more people hope for the future that they will be able to live their lives feeling safe from the virus.”

“Expanding access to the vaccine is especially important in the communities hit hardest by COVID-19, where rates of transmission, hospitalization and death are higher,” **said Sen. Murphy (D-Cook & DuPage Counties)**. “This partnership with Chicago Behavioral Hospital will provide local residents a safe and convenient place to get vaccinated, which I hope will help our community bounce back and prevent further tragedy for the individuals and families who have been impacted by this pandemic.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities, which is why it’s vital that communities like Harvey have access to the vaccine,” **said Sen. Harris (D-Cook & Will Counties)**. “Family Christian Health Center already provides so much support to the Southland, and I’m glad they will now be able to provide vaccinations to community members who need it the most.”

“I am pleased to see that AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center in the 23rd District is one of the hospitals receiving additional doses of the COVID-19 vaccination. The pilot program is a strong step in the right direction to ensuring people across our communities have access to this vital vaccine to help end this awful pandemic,” **said Sen. Cullerton (D-Cook & DuPage Counties)**

“I’m excited that Amita in Glendale Heights will become a vaccine sight. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken loved ones, created unprecedented unemployment and mental health struggles for our community. The vaccine is the light at the end of the tunnel that will allow us to get back to normal,” **said Rep. Conroy (D-DuPage County)**.

“This expanded partnership with the Lake County Health Department and FQHC is a welcome addition in making the vaccine more accessible for our residents,” **said Rep. Mayfield (D-Lake County)**. “By specifically working with community health centers, the state is meeting

our most vulnerable residents where they're at, and I'm proud to support this initiative to save lives in Lake County."

"Chicago Behavioral Hospital plays a critical role in ensuring local residents have access to quality health care and support. This new partnership between the state and trusted care providers will allow vulnerable residents to have easier access to the lifesaving COVID-19 vaccine. I applaud Governor Pritzker for his continued focus on equity in our ongoing fight against this deadly virus," **said Rep. Moylan (D-Cook County).**

The new pilot program builds on the federal FQHC vaccination program through which five FQHCs across the state receive vaccine doses directly from the federal government. Illinois has an expanding network of state-supported vaccination sites operating across southern, central and northern Illinois. To find additional information about vaccine availability, including locations and eligibility, visit [coronavirus.illinois.gov](https://coronavirus.illinois.gov).

Sites participating in the pilot program include:

**Cook & Collar Counties:**

- Family Christian Health Center, Cook County
- Chicago Behavioral Hospital, Cook County
- AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center, DuPage County
- Lake County Health Department and FQHC, Lake County

**Central Illinois:**

- Crossing Healthcare, Macon County

**Metro East:**

- Touchette Regional Hospital, St. Clair County

**Southern Illinois:**

- Rural Health, Inc., Union County
- SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital, Marion County

**Quad Cities:**

- Community Health Care, Inc., Rock Island County

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